

HE

NASSAU LITERARY MAGAZINE.

Vol. VIII.]

APRIL, 1849.

[No. VI.]

RAPHÄEL.

LAMARTINE is no less distinguished in the republic of letters than in that of state. A star in the bloody tragedy of which his country has lately been the theatre, and subsequently a candidate for the highest honor, he is now before the world in the history of the Girondists, Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and lastly, Raphael, as a competitor for literary fame,—and he promises to sustain his part as brilliantly and more successfully in the latter than in the former drama. As in the one his success depended upon the suffrages of those over whom he would have ruled and for whom he would have legislated, so in the other it must rest upon the voices of his readers—those whose tastes he would gratify or cultivate and whose principles he would form or modify. Of these are we, and therefore claim the right of canvassing his merits. This, however, must necessarily be narrowly and superficially done, for we propose to extend it only so far as it depends upon one, and that the last and least of his works.

Many a young man, attracted by the world-renowned name of the author, the practicable dimensions of the book, and its youth-winning title, has or will read *Raphäel* or *Pages of the Book of Life at Twenty*. Such were the influences by which we were induced to read it, and, if without profit, certainly not without interest.

The prologue sets forth a brief but artfully mysterious outline of the history and character of the hero of the tale, which leaves the mind of him who had intended to read no more of the book, so

intensely curious that he must needs indulge a few pages farther—but the farther he proceeds the more curious he becomes till he reaches the dénouement of the story. This effect upon the reader is proof of genius on the part of the author. The plot is simple as that of a magazine tale. The characters who figure actively before the imagination are only three in number; and this may account both for the simplicity of the plot and what might otherwise seem a meagerness and monotony of incident. That, notwithstanding this, it should so firmly enchain the interest, is evidence of some intrinsic power or merit. To ascertain which it is, and wherein it consists, demands a limited analysis of the work.

In regard to its style, the translator deserves to be commended and congratulated upon his success in rendering the best of French into the best of English. It retains the sprightliness and vivacity so characteristic of the original, while it is also enriched and adorned from the teeming and brilliant imagination of the author. For prose, it might be thought too figurative, and its imagery too poetical. In consequence of this, it does, indeed, sometimes seem strained and extravagant; but this effect upon the reader's taste would be very much modified by the reflection that the subject is fiction, and the style appropriately that of romance.

The choice of its characters is exceedingly happy, if the object was most effectually to awaken the curiosity and enlist the interest of that class of readers for whom it seems to have been expressly intended—the young. The hero is presented at that age of life, when preparation for its voyage is usually completed—when hope “springs most exulting in the human breast”—the fresh, eager and critical age of twenty. He is of “imagination all compact.” His disposition is one of romantic extravagance, but not without its like, as every one can testify who is even limitedly conversant with human nature at that period of life. There are few who can not mentally exorcise numbers of acquaintances whose peculiar temperaments are reproduced in Raphael. They are susceptible of right and wrong impressions, sometimes imprudent, but always ardent, frank, and generous; whom, if we but knew them once, we feel interested in forever. Raphael was a child of Nature, cradled upon her lap and educated at her feet.

Nurtured at Nature's breast, he caught his infant lessons from her lips. Nor did he ever prove recreant. While her maxims moulded his character, his filial affection strengthened with his growing years, and ripened into maternal adoration. His religion was Nature-worship, which, when refined by education, becomes the idolatry of beauty, *alias* Aesthetic Philosophy. "He loved the good as well as the beautiful—but he loved not virtue for its loveliness, he loved it for its beauty." In what manner a sensibility fostered under the influence of such a philosophy will abide the contact of a world marred and deformed by every shade of vice and grade of woe—what are the life and sentiments of a man thus educated—is now, when this peculiar philosophy is so ripe, an interesting subject of inquiry. The whole is well depicted in the character of Raphäel. He was a victim of morbid sensibility. Principle with him was a romantic sentimentalism.

Julie, the heroine of the story, born in the same land as Virginia, and of noble descent, possesses a temperament generous as uncorrupted childhood, and ardent as her native clime. Escaping with her parents from the isle of her birth during an insurrection, she alone is rescued from a watery grave, and, by prerogative of descent, conveyed to the Orphan Establishment of Paris. At this institution the orphan children of those who have rendered some distinguished service to the nation, or of eminent rank, may be reared in a manner worthy the desert or dignity of their parentage. Here her beauty and intelligence attract the admiration of an aged nobleman, without family, whose whole life previous had been occupied by the active pursuits of politics in public, or philosophy and literature in private. Actuated by the benevolent desire to raise her from a condition of dependence upon public charity to one to which birth had entitled her and which nature had fitted her to adorn, he has recourse to an expedient which the custom of French society makes available, and though thrice her age, becomes formally her husband that he might be virtually her father. He thus relieves her pride from the wound of dependence, her reputation from the stigma of protégé, makes her participant of his own dignity and name, and superadds his paternal beneficence. But her health, like a transplanted flower, soon de-

clining in the hot-house of aristocratic voluptuousness, she is sent to sojourn during the summer months among the hills and lakes of Savoy. Here she first meets with Raphaël, and their course of love begins—through which we leave the readers of the romance to pursue them.

Monsieur Bonald, Julie's benefactor, is a representative of Parisian nobility. He is at once a statesman, a man of science and of letters. From the political turmoil of court he retires each day, not to the bosom of a family and the enjoyment of the amenities of domestic life, but to recreate himself among the satisfying truths of science or the lighter pleasures of literature. His principles are those of the free-thinker—extremely radical both in politics and religion. These, however much to be condemned in themselves, are essential to the completeness, faithfulness, and consistency of the character of a philosopher of the French school. Such are the characters among whom the reader of Raphael is introduced.

Another element of interest which the story possesses is derived from its digressions. In these, however incorrect his moral principles, the author displays a refined taste and just sensibility. One of the most pleasing episodes, as well as most illustrative of the foregoing remark, is that in which the author introduces Rousseau and Madame Warrens. From this we cannot forbear inserting sundry quotations, though each part is so necessary to the whole, that to separate them, is almost mutilation. He presents the relation of these lovers in the light of truth, and magnanimously wipes off from the abused Madame Warrens the foul aspersions which the doted and ungrateful author of the "Confessions" has poured upon her. Hear Lamartine: "When Rousseau wrote those odious pages against Madame Warrens he was no longer Rousseau—he was a poor madman." "That woman saved him; she cultivated him; she excited him in solitude, in liberty, and in love, as the houris of the east, through pleasure, raise up martyrs in their young votaries. She gave him his daring imagination, his almost feminine soul, his tender accents, his passion for nature. Her pensive fancy imparted to him enthusiasm. She gave him the world, and he proved ungrateful! She gave him

fame, and he bequeathed opprobrium!" "No! the woman who called into existence [the gifted Rousseau] was not a cynical courtesan, but rather a fallen *Héloïse*; an *Héloïse* fallen by love and not by vice or depravity. I appeal from Rousseau, the morose old man, calumniating human nature, to Rousseau the young and ardent lover." What a sad picture is here exhibited of unprincipled genius, first employed in destroying virtuous innocence, and afterwards in immortalizing the infamy of its victim and that of its own guilt! We commend the episode to the reader as a whole, ungarbled and entire.

Raphäel is certainly a welcome accession to the stock of entertaining reading. If it does not inform the mind, it improves the taste and refines the heart. However tinctured with a sensuous philosophy, it does not contaminate the imagination with scenes of depravity and crime. If here and there may be detected a subtle moral error—if some of the descriptions of scenery and incident, and the intercourse of the characters are extravagant and unnatural, their tendency is not so pernicious as the open exhibition of images of shame over which blushing humanity would draw a veil, and which ought not to be so much as named. Whatever its faults—and these charity if not justice might excuse—thrice welcome Raphäel before the *Mysteries of Paris* and the miserable imitations, like-named, that have thickly followed its publication. What though marked with a wild enthusiasm—this only renders it more congenial to the taste of the youthful reader. Would that it might supplant some of the polluting poison which has recently poured in upon us from its native literature! Upon most minds the refined and intangible errors of Lamartine are far less dangerous in their influence than the vitiating depravity of Eugene Sue. Although the latter, in his *Wandering Jew*, evinces zealous hostility to Jesuitism, it is the offspring rather of party spirit, of anti-Jesuit rancour, than disinterested, genuine love of the truth. The disclosures which it makes may, indeed, be turned to good account by the advocates of protestant truth, but their quest among the productions of Eugene Sue, is like visiting the *Bowery* or *Five Points* in search of arguments against theatres and debauchery. The possible good which is promised will not compensate the moral temerity, the exposure to impure infection,

which the mind incurs by converse with such scenes. Safer far the chaste and beautiful, albeit unreal creations of Lamartine.— The contemplation of the beautiful elevates the moral sentiments with the taste, and never becomes a vehicle of error till idolized as a primary. It may even subserve a religious end, when regarded as an emanation of the "One altogether lovely."

EMBLEMS OF LIFE

I love to watch at summer's eve
The light clouds floating by,
And gaze upon their changing forms,
Scarce noted, ere they fly.

It minds me of the thoughts that pass,
Unheeded through the mind;
They follow in succession fast,
But leave no trace behind.

I love to watch at twilight's hour
The slowly fading light,
And see the gaudy beams of day
Give place to gloomy night.

It minds me of the hopes so bright,
With which we strew our way,
But which are sure to disappoint,
At no far distant day.

I love to wander by the brook,
To hear its gentle flow,
And watch the tiny waves borne down
Upon its bosom low.

It seems an emblem of his life,
Who lives content while here;
Ne'er troubled by ambition's dreams,
Nor vexed with jealous fear.

I love to watch the leaves at spring,
As bright and green they grow;
And see them scorched by summer's heat,
Or chill'd by wintry snow.

I love to watch all nature's works,
And from them wisdom learn,
For each and all are emblems of
This life, which none should spurn.

K.

THE GERMAN MIND.

THE Gothic style of architecture, in its form and proportions, carries with it an impression entirely peculiar to itself. Gaze upon the old Gothic hall as it stands upon some lofty hill-top, and like a king upon his throne looks down unawed on all around. The massive structure with its multitude of turrets, the spaciousness of its rooms echoing to each footstep, the wall surrounding the giant-like edifice, and the gate turning heavily upon its hinges, all have a tendency to convey to the mind an impression which is derived from no other source. There is in it such a combination of the real and ideal; of the solid and towering, that you cannot but regard it as grand and impressive in its loneliness, and the traveller as he pauses for a moment upon the banks of the Rhine and beholds one of these buildings even in its ruins, feels constrained to linger on the spot and ere he knows it bows down overwhelmed by a sense of his own insignificance. In this we realize a true portrait of the German mind. Here that power of thought; that vastness of comprehension and that exuberance of fancy which have ever characterized the Germanic tribes are happily blended and expressed.

That the Germans both in their style of thought and writing form a distinct and independent class, no one acquainted with their literature will deny. The French are to a great extent light and trivial, and although with their far-famed Academies, they have done much to discover hidden truths and have given a noble impetus to science, yet this has been effected not so much by depth of thought, as by the energy which they have ever exhibited in experiment and observation. The English, while they have turned their attention both to mental and mechanical philosophy, have still confined themselves to a few hypotheses, and though they have pursued their investigations with assiduity and success they have seldom ventured from their own well beaten track. But the German student delights to deal with mind in all its various attributes; with matter in all its multifarious arrangements; to direct his attention to whatever will shed its ra-

diance upon the intellect and for this purpose he is ready either to dig deep into treasures underneath and walk through secret labyrinths, or else to soar on wings of his own formation into ethereal regions, there to sport amid the fairest and most fantastical of fancy's bowers. He imagines to himself some gorgeous chandelier, hung out midway 'tween heaven and earth, and to its as yet unlit lamps he delights to apply the torch hoping that ere long they will burn so brightly as to shed their effulgence over every department of science.

It has become so fashionable at the present day to talk of German wildness and absurdity that when the first mention of this country is made a multitude of heresies come trooping by, and even the scholar is so overawed by pedantic flourishes that he almost fears to raise his voice in defence lest he might be accused of endeavouring "to appear intellectual." There are some who actually seem to imagine that Rationalism and Radicalism; Materialism, and Mystery, form the alpha and omega of German knowledge. It is true that many ideas are started in Germany which are both strange and chimerical, and that there is a tendency to leap over those boundaries which reason and experience would seem to have fixed, but even this wildness of thought has something encouraging in it, for it shows that there is activity of mind among the mighty, and affords us reason to indulge the expectation that something valuable must, sooner or later, be discovered. Nothing is so discouraging to the progress of learning as to see scholars lacking that energy which will enable them to walk new paths to eminence, or to suggest new sources of improvement. Where seed is sown there is some hope of harvest, and though some may be wasted and like chaff may be scattered by the winds and lost, yet some will still remain to bud and bring forth abundantly.

But the Germans need no such excuse as this, for they have already done immense service to almost every department of Science, Literature and Art. The sentiments of the old philosophers have been brought before our minds most clearly by their exertions, and though they may have erred in adopting some of their principles they have shed a bright and steady light upon

many others. There is too a depth and originality of thought among the nation which is truly refreshing. Take for instance the investigations which have been made by some of their authors as regards the ancient Mythology. They are not in a moment lost amid the "groves of the Muses," they climb not "worn out Parnassus," they tell you not of "the music of the pearly brook which flows along the gentle slopes of Helicon," but come directly to it as a system, as a great fact, and inquire whence its foundation; by what feelings prompted; what its uses and effects? Now here, we have not the superficial view of the schoolboy, nor the casual impression of common minds, but the very interior life of this religion of the past.

We remark again that men pursuing such a course, are excusable for some blunders. Ptolemy as he investigated the laws of Astronomy was by far more liable to fall into error, than he who merely talked of that glorious orb of day, and those twinkling stars of night," but although his ideas were false, he cannot but command our respect. The Germans would have been safe if they had been content to sport with beauties already developed, but they had inquiring minds and were willing to work among heaps of rubbish by others never touched, and although they might mistake the glitter of some supposed rubies others were found whose lustre will increase by exposure to the light. Their various "isms" may for a while trouble and disturb the world, but those that are false when brought to their true test will, Icarus-like, lose their wings, and their birth-place become their charnel house, while others scorched not by the blazing fires of criticism, will come forth uninjured and unharmed to attract, alone, by their inherent beauties. False hypotheses will crumble and fall, while others will take the form of theories, and the truth purified from the dross of error will appear as gold well-refined, and go forth with the power of those who gave it birth to exert its mighty and soul-stirring influence.

The writers of that country have always given proof of their having the abilities of master-workmen, but they have lacked that training which was necessary to render them consistent and reasonable. They have been sons of Genius, who have had their

quivers filled with many well-barked arrows but on account of unskillfulness have not been able to direct them quite aright. But these difficulties they are fast surmounting, and are beginning to study nature in a plainer and more attentive manner. If you are satiated and sick with the obscurities of their philosophy, you will find a delightful cure in the simplicity and sweetness of Jean Paul the strength and earnestness of Schiller. If tired of pursuing Goethe in some of his strange ideas, turn to his admirable criticisms, wonder at the precision, propriety, and clearness of his discriminations, and last of all behold that true nobleness of soul which is exhibited in some of his purely literary productions. Who does not see in the works of such men the dawns of a brighter day, and the commencement of a new era. Many more might we name who like them have taken no superficial view, but as great magicians they have called forth mighty thoughts from amid the rubbish of speculation and have given to many, a "local habitation and a name."

While then we disapprove of that materialism which forms so prominent a part of German works in general and while we rejoice to see each airy castle, demolished by the strong arm of reason, yet we do not, like some, feel disposed to talk solely of their wildness and absurdity, and thus with our puny strength, to endeavour to make a wholesale destruction of all their valuable contributions to the world of mind. Germany has already taken a prominent stand among the literary nations of the earth, and when her government shall have become better regulated, we need not fear but that with her numerous universities, her able professors and powerful writers, she will ere long wield a mightier sceptre, and having discarded their own wondering systems and fanciful ideas, her sons like warriors full clad in their proper habiliments will come forth as mighty champions in the cause of true reason, and will join their ensigns with the lion and the eagle; prepared with them to defend to the death the principles founded upon the rock of unmixed, untarnished, and unobscured truth.

SIMUL.

GEORGE LIPPARD.

A brilliant meteor, during its brief continuance, attracts more attention than the largest planet. Human Nature, although reared amid the harmony of the spheres, abhors monotony. The ordinary routine of pursuits, like the heaven-sent manna, excites a dissatisfaction which displays itself in the construction of novelties and in the investigation of matters, "not dreamed of in our philosophy." We do not agree with that class of political economists who assert that this is the peculiarity of our age. It is the characteristic of human nature. Heraclitus wept over it; Democritus laughed at it; Juvenal satirized it, and Paul preached against it. The unparalleled success of a certain class of writings must be referred to this weakness of our nature. The erroneous notion alluded to above, has its origin, partly at least, in the fact that we are conversant with a literature which is stamped with the word "ephemeral." The merest novice does not fail to notice its bewitching influence on the reading community, and hence he concludes that our age is preëminently dazzled by the charm of novelty. But could we untomb the thousands of books that, like the short lived butterfly, at one time reflected to an admiring world a few rays of the sunshine of popularity and then died and were forgotten, we could, with equal justice, come to the same conclusion with regard to our ancestors.

The subject of this article is closely identified with a portion of the current literature. Ten years ago the public knew little or nothing of George Lippard. He is now before the world as an author, and in common with other public men, is the subject of its smiles and its frowns. He is encircled by a host of admirers, who laud his productions to the skies. His magical pen has entranced them and they regard him as one of "the constellated lamps of learning." There is another class who look upon Lippard as a "brilliant satellite of sin," and would scorn to touch one of his works. There is still another class who form an outer circle, composed of persons who have not enlisted as friends or

enemies; these like Pallas in the battle of the Frogs and Mice, stand aloof and say:

“O ye gods, move not
Nor interfere, favouring either side,
Lest ye be wounded; for both hosts alike
Are valiant, nor would scruple to assail
Even ourselves. Suffice it, therefore, hence
To view the battle, safe, and at our ease.”

Public opinion has claims upon our respect. We are not often justifiable in disregarding it entirely. Its dictates are seldom founded on nothing. There must be some “substratum.” Now when men differ so widely in regard to one individual we must conclude that true “substrata” exist. In other words there must be cause for praise and blame. Let us enumerate a few of the virtues and vices that cluster around the name, George Lippard.

He has the proud consciousness of being able to say that he is a *self-made man*. He was the child of adversity and at an early age was subjected to its cruel fires. It is sometimes necessary for a man to undergo this test in order that he may understand the nature of the materials of which he is composed. The base metal will turn to dross and the pure gold will shine more brightly. The trials through which he passed would have disheartened other men, but he wended his way through gloom and sorrow and has won for himself a name which is exciting the jealousy of weaker minds.

The great popularity of Louis the Fourteenth has been attributed to his knowledge of “King craft.” We may with equal justice ascribe a portion of Lippard’s popularity to his knowledge of *author craft*. It is owing to a lack of this knowledge that

“Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.”

Hundreds of authors whose intellectual qualifications were doubtless far superior to those of Mr. L. have had their productions committed to untimely graves, merely because they did not understand the method of captivating the popular ear. The first productions of Lippard arrested the attention of the reading public by reason of their peculiar style. He took advantage of this approval, has closely adhered to the style of his early writings and has thus individualized it as his own. The reader may consult

a thousand authors, he will find some who write better, and some who write worse, but no one who writes *like* Lippard, unless it be one of that class of literary chameleons who are constantly endeavouring to fasten themselves upon the garments of a successful author, and attempt to look and act like him. In reading his works we do not enjoy that feeling which is inspired by the perusal of Lamb or Dickens. The interest which he excites bears a striking analogy to that which a pyrotechnist produces by the display of brilliant designs. He enlists the attention and not the affections. In his descriptions he has aimed rather at the terrible than at the pathetic. His mind resembles the old Moorish Castle of Aikinside; and he who faithfully follows his descriptions will have just such scenes presented as those through which Sir Bertrand passed in exploring that mysterious building.

He possesses a splendid imagination, and in this consists his chief power. If he had confined himself to the descriptions of realities his works would have been endowed with immortality. His writings founded on Revolutionary events, although "abundant dulcibus vitiis," are his best and they will live when all his other works are dead and forgotten. But his exuberant imagination could not linger on such topics long. Monks, ghosts and demons seemed to be his idols. To these he has devoted hundreds of pages, which have gained a popularity among a certain class of readers. This, however, is founded on the fact that these works pander to the lowest passions of our nature. Their imposing and startling titles are only miserable subterfuges to conceal their poison.

There is much in the writings of this author that is worthy of admiration, and the American public have given evidence of their appreciation of it; but unfortunately he has done violence to his own reputation by sending abroad works which must exert a demoralizing influence. Now we do not wish to charge him with an attempt to imitate, for we believe that nature has placed him above such an humiliating necessity; but we cannot avoid the belief that he has made a man, who has proved himself a curse to mankind, his *idola specûs*. The most inglorious appellation that can attach itself to a man in this land is "the American Sue,"

and yet George Lippard apparently exults in this unenviable title, for he suffers it to be heralded abroad in the "Quaker City," a weekly newspaper which he has lately established in Philadelphia. Eugene Sue has had his day. The lover of purity and virtue shudders at the name and trembles for the result of a repetition of experiments here, similar to those practised in France, founded on the principle that human nature must be reformed, by an exhibition of its lowest degradations and by the delineation of its vilest passions. This is a ruinous doctrine. In what estimation would we hold a physician who would order his patient, exhibiting slight symptoms of a contagious disease, to a place where the malady rages in its most malignant forms? Now the situation of an author is not much unlike that of a physician. It is the province of the one to take care of the body; of the other to preserve and expand the powers of the mind. A high authority has pronounced the mind to be diseased. Must we seek a cure by making it familiar with all kinds of crime and corruption, or must we lead it into an atmosphere of innocence and purity?

But the advocates of this principle tell us that they exhibit virtue as well as vice. To this we reply: It is not necessary for us to instil the language of the voluptuous harlot into the ear of the pure and and spotless virgin in order *to teach her virtue*. We do not believe in that "wonder working alchymy which draineth elixir out of poisons." We would erect a barrier between virtue and vice, and consider it an act of mercy in an author, if he would proclaim the principles and practices of virtue to the vicious—but it is an unhallowed work to reveal the principles and practices of vice to the virtuous.

It is a lamentable truth that of all the writings of Lippard, the work calculated to exert the most corrupting influence has gained the greatest popularity. In this he has most graphically portrayed the vices of city life. He has not hesitated to describe Philadelphia scenes *as they are*. We find no fault with his pictures as to their correctness, but we do object to their exhibition on the plea that they exert a wholesome influence. Let an artist paint just such scenes on canvass and expose them to the public gaze; the laws of the land would soon be enforced against him, and he

would be compelled to exchange his studio for the cell of a penitentiary. *Pen* pictures have a more powerful influence over the mind than *pencil* pictures. The latter are restricted by law, the former are not. The only precaution required in the former is a little drapery, the thinner the better.

Few writers of the present day exhibit as much industry as Lippard. Every one must be surprised on looking over his catalogue of books and other writings when he is told that Mr. Lippard is yet a young man. Five of his works contain two thousand four hundred and forty pages of reading matter. "Paul Ardenheim, the Monk of Wissahikon," is one of his latest, and said to be his best. In writing this work he has evidently been prompted by the sentiment of an old Roman "*Omne ignotum pro mirifico*." But like many other authors who have been too much enraptured by this phrase, he has signally failed. There is a limit to human patience beyond which it is unsafe for an author to go. The public are willing to let him linger in the regions of fiction, but he must not people it with beings that have not their likeness in Heaven, on the Earth, or under the Earth. There is a charm in fiction, and one of the infirmities of our nature consists in our being dazzled by it. But it is well for us that fiction is charming only so long as it conforms to reason. When it no longer reflects the image of reason, its power over us is gone. Our limits will not allow us to give an extended notice of this work. We will simply enumerate a few of the many impressions received in reading it. 1. It contains some beautiful descriptions. 2. The author has not *created* a single character. 3. The plot is defective. 4. The conduct of the characters is unnatural. 5. The conclusion is unhappy. 6. Whatever be the excellence of Mr. Lippard's other writings, this work has not sufficient merit to entitle him to a seat among the "Magnates" of Literature. Doubtless if he would follow the noble example of the Sibyl, by burning about two-thirds of his books, a grateful public would display as much liberality as did Tarquin, by paying for the remainder a sum equal the *worth* of the whole.

THE MOONBEAMS.

The pale moonbeams fell on yon old Hall,
On decaying roof and crumbling wall,
On the moss which on the casement grew,
All bespangled now with drops of dew.

They dimly lit its chambers so dark,
Where destroying time had set his mark;
On door-stone too, with weeds overgrown,
The gentle moonbeams tremblingly shone.

They hung on the tower once so tall,
All shatter'd now and about to fall;
Mantling the turret with ivy clad
In robes of silver, bright, yet how sad!

They play round the harebell's nodding head,
And repose themselves on flowery bed,
Mingling their sleep with the orchis bright,
As it dreams and dreams the live-long night.

They brightly shine on the silent lake,
On the grassy mead and tangled brake,
On the lowly shrub and lofty tree,
On the noisy brook bounding so free.

They lightly sport on the crested wave,
As it hurries on the shore to lave;
And bubbles that float on streams so dark,
Seem, each one, like to a fairy's bark.

Oh! strange tales can the moonbeams unfold!
As passing strange as ever were told;
As strange sights too, as any e'er seen,
The still moonlight has witness'd, I ween.

In days agoe o'er that hall it crept
And even as now on that ruin slept;
That same pale light fell on young and gay,
Sporting in pastimes of life's young day.

But joys may not last! and evermore,
They're fleeting to join joys gone before;
And sorrows and cares reign in their stead,
While gloom the stricken soul will o'erspread.

Such mournful tales can the moonbeams tell,
Of hope and of beauty bade farewell;
Of pride, ambition, humbled in turn
By teachings proud man is loth to learn.

As on yon old hall silver rays dart,
A type it seems of a broken heart;
And a voice from the ruin seems to say,—
“Behold how grandeur passeth away.”

RECOLLECTIONS OF WHAT I NEVER SAW.

A SKETCH.

It was evening in the month of July in the eighteenth century. The heat through the day had been unusually oppressive, but as the sun sunk behind the western hills a light breeze sprang up, following the monarch's heated track, and cooling wearied nature with its refreshing kiss. His last rays were now lingering on the steeples of the city and bathing themselves in the clouds gathered on the western horizon. It was a lovely evening—such as makes the heart, when free from care, to leap with very gladness. But its glories were all unnoticed by the inhabitants of the city. A deep silence had reigned over its streets throughout the day, broken only by the occasional passing of a carriage. The busy hum of its wharves was hushed, and the shipping, with naked masts, lay in their moorings. Its stores and warehouses were closed. Its factories were stopped. Not a sound of business broke the Sabbath-like stillness that everywhere pervaded it. All was suspended as if with one consent. Groups of anxious citizens might be seen collected on the corners of the streets discussing with deep solicitude the fate that probably awaited them. All felt that the hour had come when it was necessary to take some decided step. To defer it longer would be to plunge into ruin. Already an assembly of great and wise men had been convened to determine what this step should be. Two days of their sitting had passed, but no news of their action had reached the people. The close of the first day had been watched with anxiety. The second had greatly increased it. But when the third was about

to close without bringing the expected tidings, suspense became almost insupportable.

The day had been passed in eager impatience. Friend in passing friend forgot the usual salutation, in his eagerness to learn if any thing had been heard from the convention. The aged gentleman who had kept his room for months, might now have been seen proceeding in his carriage to the house of some friend to enquire concerning the all-absorbing question. Mothers involuntarily drew their infants closer to their breasts, conscious that the gathering cloud might soon burst upon the land and desolate the fair promise of its domestic hearth. The ardent youth burned with indignation, as he heard his father relate the wrongs, insult, and oppression which had been heaped upon his native country. None but felt themselves deeply interested. All saw that there remained but two alternatives—either might prove fatal—one must be adopted. The stoutest hearts could not contemplate the consequences that might follow without fear. Yet it was not the fear of cowardice, but rather the misgivings of devoted patriotism lest its greatest efforts should prove unavailing and serve only to plunge the country it would save, deeper into ruin. It was thus with feelings wrought to the highest point—with hearts glowing with the most ardent devotion to their country and burning with indignation against its enemies that the people awaited the final action of the Convention. And now as the day closed, and still brought no tidings, crowds might be seen proceeding to that part of the city where sat the Convention. It was believed that this day would bring the question to a decision, and all were eager to gain the first intelligence of the fact.

In a much frequented part of the city stood a noble old building, which still stands, made glorious by that occasion. In this sat the Convention. For three days they had been in secret session, and not a whisper had escaped as to their proceedings. On their first meeting the opinions entertained by the convention had been various, and each had been long and ably sustained by its adherents. But there was no intrigue or dissimulation. Each had spoken the honest convictions of his heart. Never was there a subject of greater importance proposed to a people, and never was

there an assembly better able to weigh and duly appreciate that importance. Age, experience, wisdom, and a courage that quailed not at death itself, if necessary to support their principles, were the characteristics of each. They all felt the awful responsibility that rested upon them. They saw that action extended not only to their own nation, but in its consequences, to all mankind. They had considered the subject in every point of view. For three days they had discussed it with all the powers of eloquence and argument, and now worn out with fatigue and anxiety, all were willing that it should be brought to a decision. The various opinions entertained at the outset of the discussion had gradually arranged themselves under two heads. The one in favour, the other opposed to the resolution before them. The leader of the opposition had just taken his seat. He had briefly reviewed the whole question. With such power had he compared the country, weak, unfriended, without men or money, with her powerful antagonist, the most warlike of nations, with thousands of well-disciplined troops flushed with recent victory, and ready to be poured upon their shores, that the stoutest heart grew tremulous. He dwelt long and powerfully on the utter hopelessness of such a contest and closed by declaring that he would never give his consent to the resolution while there remained one hope of a reconciliation. As he took his seat all eyes were turned to his opponent. He rose slowly from his chair, and remained for some moments with his eyes fixed upon the chairman. Care and anxiety were deeply graven upon his countenance, but his eye, undimmed by age, flashed a spirit bold and unconquerable—he felt that this was the turning point, and seemed summing up all his mighty energies for one last, great effort. He too, reviewed the discussion, and brought the whole vividly before them,—he went back to the commencement of the differences, and held up to view the haughtiness and arrogance that had ever characterized their adversary and her repeated assumption of principles, which if admitted, would result in their utter destruction. He referred to the petitions and supplications they had offered, again and again, and which had always been met with contempt, and had served rather to provoke new insult and outrage than to redress

their grievances. He pictured, with the power of a mighty intellect, their present condition. He pointed to their commerce, swept from the ocean—to their cities blockaded—to their citizens plundered, outraged, and murdered—to a hostile force now desolating their fields—to their towns and villages wrapt in flames—to the fields of L—— and B—— drenched with the blood of their fellow-citizens—then, in a voice that carried conviction of its impossibility to the heart, he asked where was the hope of a reconciliation? No! he continued, “the decree has gone forth,” Liberty and Despotism are in the scales, this night is the pivot, reject this resolution, and to-morrow’s dawn will see the beginning of despotism. Your firesides will be outraged, your altars desecrated, your fields laid waste, and the last hope of mankind become extinct. Pass it, and to-morrow’s sun will see the spirit of liberty go forth triumphant over this land. Each man will become a host. God will raise up armies to fight our battles for us. Yes! the righteous cause is not without a friend. Pass it, and “we must succeed—God is with us, we must succeed.” The question was settled. He had shown the fallacy of hoping for a reconciliation and the necessity for immediate, and vigorous action. He had inspired them with increased courage and confidence in themselves. The wavering were made firm. The stout-hearted were doubly nerved,—he had imparted to them his own dauntless spirit and determination. As he resumed his seat, the members rose almost simultaneously to their feet, and called for a decision. The resolution, with one exception, was carried unanimously.

LOVE AND WINE.

Love and Wine uniting,
Rule without control;
Are to the sense delighting,
And captivate the soul.

Love and Wine uniting,
Are everywhere adored;
Their pleasures are inviting,
For those who can afford.

THE DREAMER.

'Twas Autumn time—the heat of Summer's sun
Had gone and sought to dwell in other lands.
Nature clad in a golden livery smiled,
And gentle zephyrs softly fanned the earth.
A youth of passion vehement and wild,
Went forth to breathe the cool refreshing air,
And as the prospect stretched before his gaze,
His heart with strange tumultuous joy beat high.
The unfathomable blue of the sky
Above; the clouds that seem'd like winged steeds;
The thousand varying tints of forest-trees;
The mystic melody of murmuring streams,
All wrought upon his soul, and in his breast
A rapture woke. Others have felt the same.

"Would that," cried he, "this lovely prospect fair
Would always last, and never, never tire
The longing sight; would that the fire that glows
Within my breast would still the brighter glow,
And ever burn me with its lambent flame."

But vain the wish. The gentle breeze was changed
To winter's chilling blast, and the blue sky,
Obscured by clouds, put on a leaden visage,
And wood, and field and brake all naked stood,
And bleak and bare, their golden colours gone.

But where was he who dreamed erst now, and hung
In rapture o'er the loveliness of nature,
And wish'd blue skies and balmy winds, and streams
That brightly sparkled in the beams of noon,
Would cloy not on the appetite, but quell
The speechless aspirations of the soul?
And where was he, since now autumnal scenes
No magic influence o'er his heart retained?
He still lived on, and dreamed and dreamed again,
For he was young and ardent passions had,
That glowed beneath like Etna's fires, when all
Without was still, and gave no signs to tell
Of that which smouldered silently below.
He still dreamed on, tho' nature clothed herself
Not in her brightest garb, and tho' the storms
Of wintry snows to all things gave a sense
Of utter dreariness. He still dreamed on,
And the bright visions that flitted before
His mind were wove in Fancy's airy hues.
Brighter they were, and more ethereal
Than those of yore; for now gross sensual things
Were out of sight, and now the spiritual
Part of being came back upon itself,

And sought to gather from that mystic source,
The fuel to keep its fires still burning.

In the lapse of years, the colors which he wove
Of such unreal brightness in fancy's woof,
Faded away, and left no trace behind,
As the bright summer-cloud dissolves in air,
With all its gorgeous and fantastic shapes.

The Autumn winds once more were moaning o'er
The ground. The russet leaf and fading flower
Again reminded man that life was brief—
But the dreamer and his dreams had past away.

Thus fade the dreams we have in youth,
Like vernal flowers in early bloom,
Which, ere their growth is well attained,
Lie withering in the tomb.
Too bright to last, too fair to live,
The untimely frost, or summer's heat
Alike destroy the loveliness,
Which we so fondly greet.

RAMBLES OF THE GENII.

THERE have been so many rambling genii, since the time of Le Sage's *Diable Boiteux*, that I am afraid people begin to doubt the truth of their existence. But, fortunately for us writers, as well as our readers, it matters little, so the kernel is swallowed, what becomes of the shell. After this capital idea, I shall proceed to relate what is as true as the story of Le Sage himself. I was sitting, despondingly, in my room, last Wednesday evening, ruminating on sundry important topics such as the nature of incorporeal existences, the origin of evil, its prevalence, and as I then thought its predominance in the world. From the last topic I naturally reverted to the particular evils by which I was at that time individually assailed. I found that I might be almost lawfully discontented; having but little raiment and that little most poetically shabby, and moreover, unless I could "raise the wind," a certain lady below stairs would be glad to miss me from her hospitable board. I have ever had a sovereign, or I should say a democratic contempt for dress, but at the same time that I would

not desire to look like the street exquisite, neither could I contemplate with complacency that state to which I was fast approaching, the state of a goose ready for roasting. My prospects were indeed gloomy. Some three weeks before I sent on a MS. novel to the Messrs. H. From that time till Wednesday morning, I had endured all the miseries of mental see-sawing, now high up, now on the ground. "Mr. — you are wanted" bawled the lady of the larder; I went down. A little black man, with a large paper parcel from the coach office, stood at the door. I immediately recognized my poor MS. "De carriage is one dollar." One dollar thought I, for I had not a cent in the world. "But call to-morrow, Sambo, I've now no passable money." I went up stairs and opened the parcel. A polite note explained the reasons for the return of my MS., expressed a very high opinion of the work, in fact, said it was too good to sell, too far in advance of the age. So I was likely to perish by a superabundance of genius. But I consoled myself that Goldsmith's greatest work and perhaps the greatest novel in the English language was also refused, because it was too good, and it was at last bought by the strongest recommendations of Dr. Johnson. Soon the bell rang for dinner; I would have excused myself, but my appetite was so pressing, that I could not refuse the summons. As I reached the foot of the stairs I heard Mrs. — talking half whisperingly, to some one in the parlour. "He is an author,"—"what a pity was the response," as I entered. The speaker was a new boarder, a dandy, belonging to a counting house. My worthy hostess had no doubt been apologizing for my shabby appearance. My gorge rose at the indignity; I would have scolded the woman for her imprudence, but I owed her money; I would have threatened to leave her, but I knew not whither to go; I would have gone up stairs again, but I was hungry; therefore I pocketed the affront, and determined to have my revenge at another time. After dinner I returned to my room, wrote a Sonnet to Disappointment, and an Ode to Despair. After finishing my ode, and walking the room till I was tired, I sat down and wrote the following verses.

Whilst foplings so fine and so gay,
Abroad in the sun-shine may roam;
Till night spreads her veil I must stay,
A prisoner of misery at home;

Yet once I had garb of the best
Which the city's best store could supply;
Kerseysmere pantaloons, black silk vest,
And a coat super blue as yon sky.

But alas! for the wear of five years,
In spite of the thriftiest care,
Each coat-elbow hole-y appears,
And my knees appear as worn out with prayer.
My chapeau, once a white one, has changed
To a sambo, or nearly a black,
Its shape and its rim are derang'd
And my crown is beginning to crack.

My shoes are still worse—heaven knows,
'Tis the bitterest drop in life's cup,
When a man to conceal his ten toes
Must cramp them eternally up.
Thus some poor moulting bird you may see
With its head hidden under its wing,
Nay, stop, I am better than he,
Who has not the heart even to sing.

And yet, in another respect,
I'm surpass'd by my featherless friend;
Though his song, in his grief, he neglects,
He can guess when his moulting will end.
But, I fear that the sheep is unshorn,
On whose wool my poor back may compute;
Nay, I doubt if the tailor is born
Whose hands are to make my next suit.

My novel they say is too fine,
And the same they affirm'd of my play;
My poems I'm told are divine,
And yet not a cent will they pay.
And though from the critical throng
I get *credit* enough and to spare,
Oh! Genius! I wonder how long
Thy son will get *credit* elsewhere.

Yet such, from the world's youngest days,
Is the lot which thy children have known;
They need food—and are fed with vain praise,
They ask bread—the world gives them a stone.
Oh, Night spread thy darkness apace!
Envelope the earth and the sky;
Conceal a poor poet's disgrace,
From every inquisitive eye.

On completing the above poor attempt at humour, I found it was near supper time. The horror of encountering the coldness of my hostess, and perhaps the sneers of the new dandy boarder, were too much for me to endure. I paced the room till I had

walked myself into a state of weariness; and sinking into my arm chair fell asleep, from which I was aroused by sounds of laughter. It was quite dark, I saw no one, I was startled and still more so, when I heard the gruff voice of a person speaking near me. "Now that poor man," said the unseen, "prides himself on his talents, and his learning; he has injured his health, exhausted his purse, in acquiring knowledge, but see what a miserable being he is. Is not misery predominant here." My pride was roused. "Not so miserable as you may suppose; not so miserable that I would change situations even now with many a wealthy dolt, said I, without knowing or caring whom I was addressing. Again there was a laugh. The laughter was evidently not the former speaker. "I told you so my friend! You have selected a bad witness for your doctrine of Universal Misery. The fellow is indeed in difficulties, but suppose, instead of helping him to rail at Fortune, and at things as they are, we give him our aid; and relieve him from his embarrassments. Mr. —" said the kind spoken invisible, addressing me by name, "we are two spirits who disagree as to the condition of mankind. My antagonist contends that evil predominates in the world; I maintain that happiness predominates. We have agreed to test the matter by mutual observation. We will gift you with invisibility, so you may go with us and be the historian of our rambles. All that you will have to do, will be to make a fair record of our investigation, send it to the "Monthly," pay your debts, then you may laugh at the widow and the dandy. At our next meeting we will bestow upon you the necessary attributes of your office." "When shall we three meet again," said I anxiously: "Soon," was the reply; and I suppose the genii vanished, for I heard no more of them. Taking the hint of my kind and unseen friend, I send you this introduction to the *Rambles of the Genii*, the nature of which is already explained, and if my next interview prove interesting I will give an account of it to your readers.

LUCUBRATIO—SCOTCHING SHEETS.

It is one of man's first duties to notice and expose the frequent evils which are going on around him, and of these none is more iniquitous and heartless than the nefarious practice of "Scotching Sheets." This practice consisteth in a mysterious doubling of sheets in a manner known only to the initiated, and which is most uncomfortable to the toes and more especially the legs of all lengthy students. It hath evidently been derived from the nation bearing that name, for that the Scotch are but a rough and tumble set, and will never lie still whilst there remaineth any chance of kicking. It hath been propounded by some that as it doeth no great harm, (as they think,) therefore, it is derived according to the old saying "scotched not killed;" but this supposition will not hold, for the injury done is often too lasting to render this term appropriate. The reasons for the suppression of this barbarous custom are manifold and extensive. For as a natural consequence it induceth to the tearing of linen, and consequently to the pouring forth of hideous outcries and solid swearing. It also leadeth to an unjust depreciation of character, for there are many goodly personages who fall under the suspicion of having committed the foul deed, whereas all such hath been far from their minds. Moreover, it causeth the student to punish and violently belabour his serving man for imperfection in his duty, he being innocent. But the chief evil of the practice lieth in that it provideth subjects for the Lunatic Asylum. Full many a Freshman, weary with the toils of the day, goeth nodding to his bed with the full hope of a quiet sleep and wholesome repose; but instead of this, after he hath "tumbled in" he findeth himself lying between the sheets of disappointment, and kicking against the folds of perverseness! What wonder then that he should be overwhelmed with grief! What wonder that he should lose his wits?

"Madness I've seen by sudden blow,
By wasting plague and torture slow,
By mine or breach, by steel or ball,—
This madness is the worst of all."

[In the following poetical correspondence there breathes, especially on the part of Angelina, the true spirit of poetry. It is not squeezed from a reluctant brain, but flows gushing from the heart.—Its fair authoress having heard that it had fallen into our hands, her shrinking modesty petitioned for its withdrawal. We remonstrated persistingly, but without success, and at length surrendered it with much regret. But to our joy it came to us again through the post-office—not, however, it is due to Angelina to say, in the delicate hand of the original.—Ed.

TO EBENEZER.

Swift flew the hours, ah me! ah me!—
Those hours were all too fleet,
Their joys were lasting but a while,
He 'cut' me in the street.

'Tis sad, 'tis passing sad to see
The way in which we meet,
We speak no more, ah me! poor me!
He 'cut' me in the street.

He used to be a faithful friend,
But that, alas! is o'er,
The cordial words a friend can speak,
We'll interchange no more.

He may forget, I never can,
The days now passed away—
They were the happiest of my life,
But ah! too bright to stay.

He thinks perchance it may be true,
We never more may meet,
But I *never*, *never* will forget,
He, 'cut' me in the street.

ANGELINA.

TO ANGELINA.

Dost say I "cut thee in the street!"?
I "speak no more to thee"?
"The cordial words a friend can speak,"
Thou'lt hear no more from me!

I met thee! 'twas a sunny eve,
Not many days ago;
I thought my ready hat to doff,
And me bow very low.

But ah! thou deign'st me not one glance,
Thy proudly beaming eye
Was from me turned, as though in scorn,
As thou did'st hurry by.

Dost think I'd "cut thee in the street?"
Ah! friend, thou know'st me not!
'Twas thou did'st cut, and thy cold look,
By me is unforgotten.

Thou say'st "perchance it may be true,
We never more may meet!"
Remember then when I am gone,
My sad "cut in the street."

EBENEZER.

AN AGE AND ITS LITERATURE.

THE present is characteristically an age of publication. Literature groans beneath the flood which is poured upon it from a teeming press. The rapidity with which books are multiplied is a phenomenon in the literary world, the causes of which are worthy of investigation. This book-making mania is adding alloy to the gold of literature, augmenting its bulk while it diminishes its value. It is like the freshet, sliming the pure waters, involving bad as well as good in its torrent and spreading more waste than fertility in its course.

This is a novelty-loving, experimenting age. Something new, patents, labour-saving machines, are daily appearing. There is a general resorting to Mars' Hill. All are agog after some new thing. Now in literary as well as political economy, want begets a supply. Hence, to gratify this craving after novelty, new books advocating new-fangled theories, systems of moral reform, and all manner of *isms* are called into being. Innovations upon time-hallowed principles are readily made, and thus moral errors insidiously introduced.

It is moreover an impatient age. What man does he must do quickly. Travelling by animal conveyance is snail-like—steam can scarce propel him with satisfactory speed. A message to a distant friend must be borne upon the lightning's wing. And

shall literature lag behind the march of its age?—No, forsooth. An author waits not to maturate his subject or apply the *labor limæ*. His crude lucubrations are hurried off to a clamorous steam-press—published in half-bound numbers—and half read by a hurried and unthinking reader. Thus it is that popular literature has become in morality, too impure—in thought, too superficial—and in style, too negligent.

The literature of an age is an almost infallible index of its character. They are generally, if not invariably, assimilated. This may be exemplified by comparing several ages and nations with their respective cotemporaneous literatures. The Greeks, bold, independent, adventurous—in temperament and disposition, warm and generous—in manners, affable and dignified, possessed a literature free, clear, and original in thought—easy, elegant, and graceful in diction. The Romans, on the contrary, were distinguished by an unbending and frigid dignity—so, accordingly, the style of their writers is inflexibly stiff and senatorial. In Cicero this stateliness is notorious, and is more or less rife with all their authors. It is the distinctive feature of their literature—modern times afford further illustrations of the fact. The Germans are grave and phlegmatic—the French are gay and volatile. The literature of the former is strong and massive; that of the latter, sprightly and vivacious. The English occupy a medium position in point of character, and in literature, have neither the heaviness of the German nor the airiness of the French.

But in all times and in all countries, they have changed with each other. Literature conforms to every shifting phase of society. It pliantly bends to the spirit of its age. The infancy of a nation, especially if cradled amid the commotion of war, is the age of poetry. It was then that Greece produced a Homer. England had but just struggled into being and was scarcely yet settled from the turmoil of foreign and domestic conflict, when Chaucer and Spencer appeared. The maturity of a nation, with circumstances of peace and prosperity, is its age of philosophy. It always succeeds that of poetry. The romantic adventures of war having ceased, the epic muse is no longer invoked to the narration of deeds of valor, nor the lyric song employed in their celebration.

The genius of literature retires from the vagaries of fancy to the abstractions of reason. Bacon, and Newton, and Locke were each preceded by those who were as eminent in poetry as they were in philosophy. Historians do not appear till a nation is far advanced and annals have accumulated worthy of chronicling.

Finally, the influence of an age upon the moral character of its literature deserves to be prominently considered. Almost every production of the Augustan age, an age rendered eminently voluptuous and dissolute by wealth, luxury, pride of universal dominion and the idleness of cessation from conquest, must undergo thorough expurgation to adapt it to the refinements of modern taste—in the seventeenth century, the English too, yet rude and gross in moral taste, relished with zest what now they spurn with disgust.

From all which facts the legitimate inference is that it is the character of an age which moulds that of its literature. The latter may react upon and accelerate the developement of the original bent of the former, but rarely revolutionizes or even modifies it. Some master-spirits in literature have, indeed, wrought salutary, and others evil changes upon society. But these are exceptions, not the general rule. They write to be read, and therefore pander to the popular taste. If this be true, what does the character of our national literature promise to become? So long as the arena of physical enterprise is so open, the avenues to wealth so numerous and inviting, and this feverish anxiety about grosser things continues, our hopes must be as humble as our fruits—our literature will be light, frothy, floating, unstable, and evanescent.

SERMON SUPPLEMENTARY.

TEXT.—“*O sacred solitude! Divine retreat!*”

Solitude and its associations are to many minds revolting and forbidding. They startle at its sober abstractions, its faithful self-searchings and its dread self-revealings. Whatever their self-love, they dislike to exchange the society of others for that of self.

They are fain to turn from the sombre gloom of the forest and walk enchanted, the gay gardens and cultivated fields of social life. This aversion to solitude may arise from a principle of their natures. Man was designed to be a social being, or his interest and destiny would not have been thus intermingled and blended with those of his fellows. But this principle may have been fostered to excess by education.

"Nature its mother, habit is its nurse;
Wit, spirit, faculties, but make it worse."

Another reason may be found in the fact that the truthful self-discoveries of solitude are not flattering to human pride. It likes not to be told of its faults even though whispered by the still small voice of conscience in the time and places of lonely retirement. It likes not to be arraigned before that tribunal where conscience sits in stern judgment on its merits and defects. Next to that which must decide its eternal state, it shrinks from this with greatest dread. Satisfied with the opinion of others if favourable, or condemning it if the reverse, it is pleased with the exterior of the sepulchre, and forbears to look upon the memorials of corruption and death that lie buried within. Its timid language is

"Venture not to ope mine heart,
And behold the hell that's there."

Some yield to this repugnance to retirement and self-scrutiny, whose lives exhibit, and whose hearts sometimes feel its want. Had it been the habit of the gifted but erring Burns he might have enjoyed, in a happy experience, an answer to the touching prayer,

"O wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see oursel as ithers see us,
'Twad frae mony a blunder free us,
And foolish notion."

Painful as is the exercise, its benefits are more than compensatory. It tells with frankness, what the partiality of a friend would conceal, or the malignity of a foe exaggerate.

But self-knowledge is not the only advantage which solitude confers. It is in private alone that those acquisitions are made,

which shine with any permanent lustre in society or contribute to its advancement. He who depends upon society for his improvement renders back to it only what he has received. It is under no obligation to him. Nay, he is but a drone in the social hive, for he adds nothing to the common stock. Society is a kind of mart where individuals emerging from their several retreats exchange the mental commodities that have been gathered in retirement, and all are mutually pleased and profited. In solitude the philosopher best digests his thoughts, the statesman matures his schemes for the public weal, and the poet courts the genius of song, and the saint seeks his God.

"O, lost to virtue, lost to manly thought,
Lost to the noblest sallies of the soul,
Who think it solitude to be alone,—
Our reason, our guardian angel and our God!"

EDITORS' TABLE.

HAVING sent off to the publisher the few articles with which our fellow-students have favoured the present number of the Monthly, we sat down to our naked table. We felt deserted and lonely after parting with what it had cost us so much toil and time to gather. But they are gone, precious things! to prove the cold charity of a criticising world; and we would indulge no regretful reflections, but, bidding them a hearty God-speed, turn to our appropriate duties.

As a natural consequence of that mutual relief and vacuity which succeed the completion of a task, we fell into a reverie of editorial self-glorification and soliloquized thus:—No! the tripod of the Monthly is not altogether a humbug, even though one editor is not *comfortably* seated upon it ere he must rise and give place to another. The office of an editor is a worthy one, however briefly or unworthily filled. We would not disparage it to adequate it to our capacity. Let it stand in all its large dimensions, noble proportions, and commanding position.—Look out upon the arena of life which we are soon to enter—for whose dusty conflict we have been burnishing and buckling our armour—and say, who leads a larger host, whose voice sounds louder in command than that of the editor? The learned professions are to society what the brain is to the nervous system. This is especially true in America. They feel and the nation sympathizes—they think and the nation acts. Among these, lowest in name but not in desert, is the editor. His influence is often felt where pride would blush to own the obscurity of its source. It vibrates to city and village, to mansion and hamlet, wide as the post and quick as the lightning's flash. He is the alchemist of literature, for it must pass the crucible of his criticism to public favour or condemnation. At his word the politician rises or falls. He catches and reflects from the "hill of science" the first bursting light of each new discovery and diffuses it far and wide. Such is the unappreciated editor on the great world's busy stage where we are soon to act our part.—But what is he on that of the "miniature world" in which we now figure; whose scenes are often to the former as the mimic sports of the child to the stern realities of the man? Humbler though his sphere, his relations within it are similar—comparatively puerile though his cares and vexations, to him they are no less real and earnest. He has the same anxiety about the merit of his periodical and the punctuality of its issue—is subject to the same disappointments, and incurs the same responsibility in passing judgment upon the respective claims of his contributors. We would not then "despise the day of small things:" it is preparatory to the day of great things.

Trifling as it may now seem, it may be the foreshadowing of momentous things to come.

We were here aroused by a rap upon our door and "bored" with a protracted call. If our successors of the corps editorial find anything consoling in the foregoing reverie, they are welcome to its benefit.

But we have no time to waste in reverie. Our duties are too important to be dreamed over, and we proceed to notice our contributors.

The first in chronological order, if in no other, is an essay entitled "The True Honour of Man," by one who subscribes himself "Experience." His fictitious name has certainly a very modest relation to his subject! Hoping to be enlightened by the words of "experience" we perseveringly read every word of his article, and the most charitable judgment we can pronounce upon it is, that it contains a good many sensible thoughts, but rather common-place. Whatever be the extent of his "experience" as a man of "true honour," we should not infer that he had enjoyed much "experience" as a writer. Now bad spelling we do not presume to criticise, for the manuscripts of some of our best contributions plainly show that good spelling has fallen into utter disuse or literary contempt. Genius sometimes takes great liberties with language, but such latitude as the inversion of established grammatical cases is intolerable. Hear the man: "who we can always regard as a friend"—"let him be *whomsoever* he is."

"Minor's" unpretending approach has disarmed us of severity, even if his contribution were vulnerable to criticism. It has no faults for which youth and inexperience will not apologize, but many merits which age and experience would be proud to own. Assuming the freedom of a few slight alterations, we should probably have given it insertion, had it not been forestalled by others so similar that it would have rendered the character of our selections too monotonous. We will therefore hand it over, and commend it to the indulgent consideration of our successor. Reciprocating the interest and well wishes of "Minor," we sincerely hope that he may ultimately attain the excellence which his early attempt so promisingly augurs.

Discouraged by the dearth of poetical contributions previous to our final mathematical examination just passed, we had written for publication the following advertisement:

LOST!

The Muse of old Nassau! Frightened probably by the formidable array of angles and curves displayed in *prospectu* by the approaching mathematical examinations she has "hung her harp upon the willows," and winged her flight to more congenial parts. A chance for poetical immortality to any who may apprehend and restore her.

We rejoice, however, that she has since been recovered—that the Monthly reënjoys her presence and smiles—and that, by inspiring her capturers and

votaries with the effusions of the foregoing pages, she is rewarding their desert with an earnest of poetical renown.

Our Muse used to be an innocent well-mannered jade, but in her intercourse with the outside world, during her vagrant absence, she seems to have contracted one of its ways. The sober Presbyterian maxims under which she was trained at home we are sure never taught her to make merry at the expense of others. She tickles one and stings another—and this she does all for sheer self-amusement. It is unseemly to demean thus, but she has become very independent and coquetish—as we feared she would if she ever got out among certain others of her sex—and will do as she pleases “any how,” and we have to let her. In the first allusion of the following she is comparatively harmless, and only inflicts a playful love-part. But for the second, if her sex and Rienzi’s well-known gallantry do not protect her, she may suffer the dire consequences of his resentment.

“Princeton is a famous town,
Filled with poets of great renown,
Who, to rhyme they surely must,
If they don’t they’ll surely *bust*.
First, there’s,—sweetest maid,
In all the town, as some have said,
Invokes her muse to sweetly sing
The beauties of a verdant spring;
And tells of insects, buzzing bees,
Of birds now warbling on the trees;
Of buds now opening into flowers,
Beneath gay April’s genial showers.
Then speaks of “*students* passing by”
And locking up an infant fry,—
Excepting two, who all that day
Were strolling on the street, they say.
Next comes “Rienzi,” or the “Buck-eye bard,”
Who, jingling rhyme, tries very hard,
And says, “that Byron used to quote
What by other men was wrote.”
Now, first he chaunts of turtle doves,
Of pointer dogs, and then his loves,
Of roses sweet, and violets blue,
Friends that are lasting, fond and true,
Then sweetly sings, or tries at least,
Of a “pony horse,” some call a *beast*.
But forced is he by muse unkind,
In *prose* his every thought to bind.”

With respectful obeisance we retire, grateful to our contributors—grateful to our well-wishers—but, above all, grateful to be relieved of the trials of an
EDITOR.

P. S. We acknowledge with pleasure the receipt of the second number of “The Collegian,” a monthly periodical very creditable to the literary en-

terprise of the students of Dickinson College, Pa. Their disposition to exchange with us is heartily reciprocated. We are happy thus to cultivate a spirit of friendly literary intercourse with students of sister institutions. Because they are students we extend to them the hand of literary fraternity. Let, then, all embargo of stranger-feeling be removed, and let us mutually act upon the principle of "free trade and sailors' rights." They must indulge us, however, with an occasional irregularity in our issues, as circumstances beyond our control render it sometimes unavoidable. Moreover, we have not, like "The Collegian," the hope of pecuniary emolument to incite us to punctuality.